

**City of Aberdeen Council Meeting
November 24, 2014**

Present: Mayor Bennett, Councilwoman Elliott, Councilman Garner,
Councilwoman Landbeck and Councilwoman Young

Absent: None

Also Present: Douglas Miller, City Manager
Phyllis Grover, Director of Planning and Community Development
Kyle Torster, Director of Public Works
Henry Trabert, Chief of Police
Opiribo Jack, Director of Finance
Monica Correll, City Clerk

Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The prayer was led by Mayor Bennett and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Young.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Councilwoman Elliott and seconded by Councilwoman Landbeck to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2014 Council Meeting, the November 10, 2014 Business Meeting/Work Session, and the November 17, 2014 Business Meeting/Work Session.

The minutes were approved by a vote of 5 – yes.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Proclamation in Honor of County Executive David R. Craig

Mayor Bennett presented County Executive Craig a proclamation to honor him for his service to the citizens of Harford County.

2. Presentation of the Ramona and Freddy Bennett Memorial Scholarship Award

Mr. Alexander Maccallini was presented the Ramona and Freddy Bennett Memorial Scholarship from Aberdeen Heritage Trust. Mr. Maccallini, an Aberdeen High School graduate, is attending college for chemistry and history.

3. Oath of Office by Kyle Torster as Director of Public Works

By oath of office administered by Mayor Bennett, Mr. Kyle Torster was officially installed as Director of Public Works.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

LEGISLATIVE SESSION: None

BUSINESS OF THE CITY:

1. Unfinished Business - None
2. New Business - None
3. Business from the Director of Planning and Community
 - a) Preliminary Site Plan for Mt. Zion Baptist Church

Ms. Grover stated that the parcel is located off of Old Post Road and Michael Lane, across from the Affinity Old Post Apartments on Hanover Street. It is zoned B3 (highway, commercial). Mt. Zion Baptist Church would like to build a one-story, 40,000 sq. ft. church with approximately 300 parking spaces in phases. The Planning Commission recommended the preliminary site plan for approval.

Also present were: Mr. Dudley Campbell, Principal of Bay State Land Services, Forest Hill, Maryland; Mr. Mitchell Ensor, Bay State Land Services; Mr. James C. Williams, Pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, and other church members. Mr. Campbell stated that the property is 6.14 acres and will be serviced by public water and sewer. The build-out will take approximately 10-15 years for completion. The number of parking spaces might be changed depending on the needs of the church.

There was a revision made to the ingress and egress to the property. It was determined that they had rights on the private road named Hanover Street. Discussions between Mt. Zion Baptist Church and Affinity Old Post, LP have commenced about a common drive agreement and a maintenance agreement but are not finalized. The private entrance off of Hanover Street will not be used at this time, but Michael Lane would be used instead. The entrance on MD 7 would be chained off for emergency use only. He added that the plan reflected the final revisions as requested by City Staff and the Planning Commission.

Pastor Williams discussed the congregation, their outreach ministry, and programs. Their current location in Havre de Grace was over 100 years old and about 85% of the congregation resided in Aberdeen. Council discussion followed.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Garner to approve the Preliminary Site Plan for Mt. Zion Baptist Church.

The motion passed by a vote of 5 - yes.

- b) Revised Final Subdivision Plat, Lot 1 – Lands of Stancill

Ms. Grover said that Revised Final Subdivision Plat, Lot 1 is located off of Beards Hill Road and the proposed site for the Colony at Beards Hill. The Colony at Beards Hill is a 192 unit apartment development, approved by the Council in the fall of 2012. The revision will: add utility easements for stormwater management; add the location of Nonpareil Road; and, create Lot 1 (15.372 acres), proposed Lot 3 (5.118 acres) and reserved Parcel A (1.151 acre). The Planning Commission recommended it for approval at their November 19, 2014 meeting.

Mr. Campbell explained the history of the plat and that the metes and bounds have been changed to meet City stormwater management requirements. There are proposed road improvements along Beards Hill Road and a proposed road named Nonpareil Road. The proposed road is the responsibility of the developer until the proposed City park is constructed. No City funds will be used. The new road has been named Nonpareil Road after a baseball team that existed in Aberdeen over one hundred years ago. He also stated that the pumping station land will be deeded in fee to the City and a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted and given to City officials for review.

Council discussion followed. It was clarified that the split zoning was comprised of Lot 1, zoned R3 (high density residential) and Parcel A and Lot 3 are zoned B3 (highway commercial), with Nonpareil Road separating the two districts. Council discussion ensued about plat notes, adequate parking, and traffic concerns. Mr. Campbell said that increased traffic was factored into the project based on Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) studies.

A motion was made by Councilman Garner and seconded by Councilwoman Landbeck to approve the Revised Final Subdivision Plat, Lot 1 – Lands of Stancill.

The motion passed by a vote of 5 - yes.

c) Second Revised Final Subdivision Plat, Lot 4 – Beards Hill Park

Ms. Grover explained that the Planning Commission made a favorable recommendation to approve this plat at their November 19, 2014 meeting. Mr. David Taylor, President of David G. Taylor & Associates, Abingdon, Maryland, representing the owner, explained the property details. The revised plat was 3.49 acres, zoned B3, and located at West Bel Air Avenue and Beards Hill Road. Construction was completed on the retail facility but needed some engineering revisions to drainage and utilities easements, water meter locations, and light poles.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Elliott and seconded by Councilwoman Landbeck to approve the Second Revised Final Subdivision Plat, Lot 4 – Beards Hill Park.

The motion passed by a vote of 5 - yes.

4. Business from the Chief of Police

Chief Trabert reminded everyone about the Aberdeen Police Department (APD) Holiday Food and Toy Drive, the 4th Annual Christmas on Patrol, and other collections to benefit the community. He announced that APD and the American Legion were starting a new program this year called, Shop with a Cop. He referred everyone to the City and APD websites for holiday safety tips.

5. Business from the Director of Finance

The following is the “Summary of the City’s Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2014” as reported by Mr. Jack.

“The financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 were audited by the independent accounting firm, McGladrey, LLP. The City received an unqualified opinion on the financial statements.

Overall, the financial position of the City improved over the prior fiscal year. The General Fund had a budgetary surplus of \$1.4 million. Most of the surplus came from property and income tax revenues, and savings in salaries and benefits.

The Water Fund posted net income of \$393 thousand before capital grants and transfers. The Sewer and Stadium Funds posted net losses of \$498 thousand and \$34 thousand, respectively. However, the Sewer Fund realized a profit of \$717 thousand with capital grants, and the Stadium Fund posted a profit of \$771 thousand with capital grants and transfer-in.

The City’s long-term liabilities decreased by \$1.5 million to \$27.7 million.

The City’s net position increased by \$4.5 million to \$69.1 million. Net position is the difference between total assets and total liabilities. This increase is primarily due to tax revenues, charges for services, and capital grants.

The fund balance for the City’s governmental funds (General, Capital Projects, and Special Funds) was \$11.8 million. Fund balance is the difference between the assets and liabilities of a governmental fund. About \$9.5 million of the \$11.8 million is unassigned and can be used to support the general government’s operating needs.

In the governmental funds, revenues increased by \$1 million over the prior year due to increase in highway user revenue, police aid, and state grants. Expenses increased by \$854 due to higher medical insurance premiums, winter operations, and investments in a neighboring park, the Fire Department, and the City’s IT infrastructure.

In the enterprise funds, capital grants and contributions decreased by \$1.5 million from the prior year due to decreased state funding for the upgrades to the waste water treatment plant. Expenses increased by \$906 thousand mainly due to debt service, depreciation expense, energy and process chemical costs associated with the ENR project which went live in the fiscal year.

Finally, it is worth noting that the City's Net Position has steadily increased since 2006. The trend in net position may be a useful indicator of whether the financial position or condition of the City is improving or weakening. The trend indicates improvement."

6. Business from the Director of Public Works (DPW)

a. Bid No. 15-06, Refuse Truck

Mr. Torster explained that the City received four sealed bids and all met the required specifications. There was a difference of \$177.00 between the two lowest bidders. The Public Works Department recommended that the bid be awarded to GranTurk Equipment Company, Inc. located in Bridgeport, Pennsylvania, for one, new, 25-yard rear loader refuse truck. GranTurk was recommended because they have an authorized service branch located in Baltimore for parts and warranty work, whereas the lowest bidder has a contract with a third party vendor. In addition, the Maintenance Foreman's research revealed that GranTurk had a stronger track record in vehicle maintenance.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Garner to award Bid No. 15-06, Refuse Truck to GranTurk Equipment Company, Inc., Bridgeport, Pennsylvania in the amount of \$137,554.00.

The motion passed by a vote of 5 - yes.

Mr. Torster reported on the following:

- The Hillcrest project construction progress.
- The Ripken Stadium storm water pond maintenance repairs were completed on November 17, 2014.
- Due to disparity between two bids for the repair of the Wastewater Treatment Plant roof, DPW will advertise for rebids in January, open for rebids in February, followed by the potential award in March, 2015.
- The roof repairs at 18 North Howard Street were completed.
- Snow plowing procedures and safety concerns were discussed and that the public should report glitches in service to the City.

7. Business from the City Manager

Mr. Miller welcomed the new Director of Public Works, Mr. Kyle Torster, to the City of Aberdeen.

BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

1. Business from the City Council – None
2. Business from the Mayor – Mayor Bennett made the announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Next Council Meeting: Monday, December 15, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. followed by a Holiday Cookie Reception.

Planning Commission Meeting: Wednesday, December 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Aberdeen Christmas Street Activities, Saturday, December 6, 2014, Parade begins at 3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Being no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:22 p.m.